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## **Public Service Announcement**

### **SNAKE SIGHTINGS ARE ON THE RISE CITY OF VICTORVILLE PROVIDES SNAKE SAFETY TIPS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 13, 2016**

“Snakes! Why’d it have to be snakes!” Most of us empathize with Harrison Ford’s character, Indiana Jones, when he utters this famous line in the hit movie, “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” Just like Indy, mention of the word “snake” causes even the bravest among us to have a fear-induced, skin-crawling response.

Several Victorville residents have had to face their snake fears “head on” this Spring as snake sightings have been on the rise. According to Victorville Animal Control, calls regarding snakes have spiked to higher-than-normal levels in recent weeks.

“We typically receive a total of eight to 10 snake calls during the entire spring season, but snake calls have spiked to one to two calls per day in recent weeks,” says Dana Wellborn, Victorville’s Emergency Management Coordinator.

Most snakes are harmless, but venomous snakes can be found in our desert environment. For this reason, Victorville Animal Control urges you to exercise caution and follow these tips to safeguard yourself and your loved ones.

#### **SNAKE SAFETY TIPS:**

- \*Back away from any snake you find and don’t touch it.
- \*Wear closed-toe shoes and long, loose-fitting pants when you are outside walking, hiking or doing yard work.
- \*Watch your step and use a flashlight to help you see at night.
- \*Don’t put your hands in dark holes or crevices.

- \*Remove bushes, wood piles, and tall grass where snakes can hide. Also, pick up any trash or debris that can attract mice and other prey.
- \*Keep the doors to your home, porch and garage closed.
- \*If you are bitten by a snake, dial 9-1-1 and remain calm. DO NOT try to capture the snake. If possible, take a picture of the snake or look for distinguishing patterns that will help medical staff with your treatment.

Wellborn also cautions that trying to identify snakes can be a dangerous proposition. “If you’re not an expert, it can be difficult to distinguish between a gopher snake and a rattlesnake,” explains Wellborn. “If you see a snake, it’s best to back away and call for help with removal.”

Fortunately, you don’t have to follow Indiana Jones’ path and repel into the tomb with thousands of snakes. If you find a snake in your home or entryway, call Animal Control for assistance. The Victorville Animal Control phone number is (760) 955-5089.

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